THE WASHINGTON POST
A 2 Friday, July 18, 1975

Ford Acts To Meet Author

By Carroll Kilpatrick
Washington Post Staff Writer

White House Press secretary Ron Nessen said yesterday that efforts are under way to arrange a meeting between President Ford and Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn. But one informed Capitol Hill source said the famous author has left Washington and does not plan to return.

Solzhenitsyn is still in the United States and plans to remain here for some weeks writing about his first visit to this country. He was described as extremely happy about the American visit and pleased with the reception he received.

Solzhenitsyn also was reported to have been surprised and even perplexed by the controversy over whether he was to meet the President.

It was said that Solzhenitsyn made no request to see the President, had never expected to see him and told some of his American friends that since he was a writer and not a politician he had nothing to say to the President.

When Sens. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) proposed that Mr. Ford see Solzhenitsyn, the White House replied that his schedule would not permit it.

Later, the President changed his position and said he would be pleased to meet with the writer. However, according to Nessen, no invitation was extended and the President waited for the author to ask for an appointment.

Following Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's disclosure in Milwaukee Wednesday that he advised the President against meeting the visitor, Nessen said Helms and Thurmond "have been working on the matter" of arranging a meeting.

A Thurmond spokesman said he did not believe a meeting would take place. However, it was known that the White House was still trying to arrange a meeting at some point before Solzhenitsyn returns to Switzerland, where he has made his home since leaving the Soviet Union.

Nessen acknowledged that all the mail and telegrams received at the White House was critical of the President's initial decision not to meet the author and that there were no communications endorsing the President's position.

On Capitol Hill, several conservative Republican senators used the Solzhenitsyn controversy to attack detente, and Sen. James Buckley (Cons-R-N.Y.) introduced a resolution to give Congress veto power over acceptance of the proposed European Security agreement, which Mr. Ford is expected to sign at a 35-nation meeting in Helsinki the end of the month.

Mr. Ford continued his efforts yesterday to persuade the House to ease the congressional ban on arms sales to Turkey.

He invited 130 members to a breakfast meeting where he, Kissinger, and Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger argued for repeal of the arms ban.

Last week, the President gave a breakfast for 140 House members. He will give another breakfast for the remainder of the House membership soon, Nessen said. By a vote of 41 to 40, the Senate repealed the ban and the House is scheduled to vote on the repeal measure next week.